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Art Needlework.

HINTS FOR EMBROIDERY.

II.

MAIL cloth is among the newest fabrics for embroidery. It somewhat resembles in texture the deservedly popular Roman satin, but is an improvement on it. Somewhat heavier in texture, it has a richer effect, the woven surface being divided into tiny squares, somewhat resembling those of huckaback towelling, which gives it great brilliancy and renders it especially appropriate for working in cross stitch or for darned backgrounds intended to throw up the design in outline. It comes in the exquisite "art shades," is fifty inches wide, and is not dear at three dollars a yard. Mail cloth is used for cushions, footstools, portières, quilts—in fact, everything for which a heavy material of the kind is suitable.

Useful makes of *écru* linen come in three convenient widths for various purposes, measuring respectively twenty-nine, forty-seven and fifty-six inches. One of these, known as Roman linen, closely resembles Roman canvas, and would be very suitable for tinting and embroidery combined. Another, of a cream shade, is of a fine firm twilled texture, very good for bold outline work or appliqué. These linens are really used for almost everything possible to be embroidered, the work being done in various styles, with all kinds of silk—Roman floss, twisted silk, rope silk and filo-floss. Flax thread can also be used on it, for economy. A novelty for infants' use is known as Basket flannel; it is chiefly used for cot spreads and carriage covers. It is stamped in small squares, which makes it easy for working on in cross stitch with twisted wash silk or rope silk. For many purposes faille silk is much used, especially for Gobelin's work done in *filoselle*. A heavier quality of the same kind of silk, known as *Soie de Guise*, is used for curtains. It comes in five or six antique shades and is \$3.50 a yard, measuring fifty inches wide. Then there are any number of fancy silks for scarves, draperies, cushions and furniture coverings, while for the down pillows—which are made from twenty-four to thirty inches square—large figured silks are used, the lines of the pattern being frequently enriched with embroidery. These pillows are finished with silk, cut fringe or moss trimming.

The charming semi-conventional border design of a large flowering clematis given with this number is eminently suited for curtains or a portière on mail cloth, if used in conjunction with the broader design of a similar kind published last month. A quick and effective method of treatment would be to outline the entire pattern with a couched line of thick gold thread or a fine colored silk cord. The outline could also be executed in rope-stitch with rope silk, if preferred. The manner of arrangement should be as follows: Use the broad design for a dado, repeating it as often as is necessary to fill in the width of the curtain. Then take the border for a frieze, repeating it in like manner. On either side of the dado or frieze lay close together three or four lines of the cord used for couching. Then within these dividing lines fill in the background with darning, using on a light ground a darker shade of *filoselle* of the same tone of color. This will bring out the flowers and leaves in bold relief, and the darning will take very little time to do on account of the diaper pattern on the mail cloth, which renders the work as easy as if darning on huckaback towelling. The accompanying illustration is given for the benefit of those who do not understand how to work a couched line. The stitch for pattern darning, it will be seen by the other illustration, exactly resembles stocking mending, except that the threads are further apart. For a large piece of work, such as that under consideration, the stitches on the surface may be somewhat longer than shown here. For couching, it is to be observed that the fastening stitches should always be at right angles with the cord and not slanting. Where the curves are sharp, the sewing must be closer, since it is imperative to keep very closely to the outlines. The ends should be pushed through to the back with a stiletto, and then secured. Sometimes the gold cord is used double, but this is not necessary, and much increases the difficulty of keeping a steady line. It would be preferable to use a cord sufficiently thick to show up well without doubling it.

Many designs in the back numbers of *The Art Amateur* are suitable for this kind of work, which is just now very popular—for instance, the tulip tree border in the March number or the bold poppy design in the June number of this year. This very effective combination of outlining and darning can be varied by darning the flowers within the lines instead of filling the background, but for the clematis and most floral designs I do not think the result would be so good. Such a pattern, however, as the beautiful old Italian model given in January for velvet and satin appliqué could well be utilized in this manner. This design would also be very effective outlined and filled in with old point lace stitches, a very favorite method just now for all kinds of scroll work patterns and conventionally treated flowers.

Doilies are now frequently made in the shape of a large leaf or flower buttonholed around the edge and afterward cut out. Sometimes they are outlined with a cord to match the linen or material on which they are worked. This cord is laid down with buttonhole stitch in colored silk, instead of being couched. The

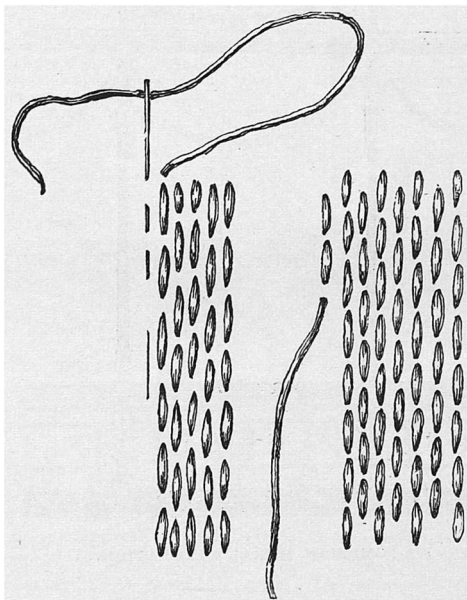
leaf or petals are then veined with the same cord and the spaces filled in with open lace stitches in silk of the same color as that used for sewing down the cord. The effect is excellent, and the work is quickly done.

A new embroidery silk lately introduced in fast artistic colors is called Roman floss. It takes the place of filo silk, and is especially adapted to all kinds of linen work. It is brilliant and easy to work with, filling spaces more readily—that is, with less labor—than filo floss. It is likely to be very popular.

EMMA HAYWOOD.

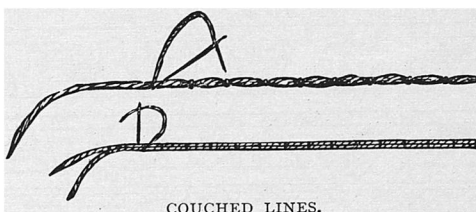
APPLIQUÉ WORK.

APPLIQUÉ work is still fashionable. A few words as to the best manner of setting about it in order to ensure success may be acceptable: Supposing the design is to



IRREGULAR AND PATTERN DARNING.

be appliquéd in plush or velvet, begin by stretching tightly and firmly a piece of coarse linen. Upon this draw the pattern you wish to appliqué. Then paste the plush or velvet on the reverse side. For this purpose glue paste is as good as any; it is made by stirring a small lump of glue, previously melted, into ordinary strong flour paste. When the pasted material is thoroughly dry cut out the design already drawn on the linen with a sharp pair of scissors. If the pattern be very intricate, or a conventional one, it will be necessary to draw it out also on the material to be worked upon, in



COUCHED LINES.

SINGLE FOR OUTLINES, AND DOUBLE FOR GOLD WORK.

order to ensure accuracy. The work is usually done in a frame, though this is not always necessary. Having placed the design, cut out, in position, pin it down carefully, afterward sewing it firmly over the edges with fine silk exactly matching the plush or velvet in color. This done, the outline must be couched or worked in rope stitch. A richer effect is gained by outlining first with rope stitch and then placing outside, but quite close to this outline, a couched thread of gold. Solid embroidery is also frequently appliquéd, especially in ecclesiastical designs. The work is executed in a frame on linen. When finished, paste is lightly brushed over it at the back to keep it firm. When dry, it is cut out and pinned on in the manner already described, but instead of outlining the flowers in the usual way—which is quite permissible, however—fasten them on by means of an outside row of long and short stitch with the same silks that have been used for embroidering. When skillfully carried out, this method is very beautiful, for the appearance is of the work being directly on the stuff, although in reality the effect is much richer, because more solid and raised than if this were the case.

A very rapid way of doing appliqué work suitable for summer curtains, counterpanes and portières is to cut out the flowers from a piece of flowered cretonne and place them artistically on a foundation of Bolton sheeting or Roman linen. Then baste them down and buttonhole the edges with rope silk or coarse flax thread,

to match the coloring of the cretonne flower or leaf. The stitches need not be very close together. The leaves should also be veined with the silks, and the centres of the flowers embroidered in satin stitch or French knots. The result will be found charming for decorating summer cottages. It is not necessary to put this kind of appliqué work in a frame. In fact, it can be better done in the hand; but it will probably require pressing when finished. The very best way of smoothing out such work is—not to use an iron, for ironing is apt to flatten the work too much—but as follows: Spread a clean sheet on the floor; lay the work face downward upon this, and pin it out securely, stretching it as much as possible. Then pass a sponge all over the back of the material, using only enough water to dampen every part of it. Leave it till quite dry, and you will find the work smoothed out effectually. I do not recommend this, or indeed any kind of appliqué work to be introduced where there is likely to be actual wear on it by friction, such as would be the case with cushions, chair seats or footstools. But for many purposes it is a style of embroidery that highly commends itself for richness and variety.

E. H.

New Publications.

VIEWS AND REVIEWS, by W. E. Henley, is one of the best books of literary criticism that has of late left the English press. The author is well read, seldom partial, usually capable of looking at both sides of his favorite authors. That he has a wide range and a catholic taste is shown by his including Dickens and Disraeli, Dumas and Hugo, Arnold and Banville, Jeffries and Barrow in his book. That he has a judicial turn of mind is shown by his treatment of Meredith, of Byron, and of Richardson. He does not fear to attack Shakespeare nor to praise Tournier. He can drop from Tennyson to Dobson, mount from Locker to Longfellow. He appreciates Berlioz and finds Champfleury not beneath notice. He enjoys Lever's jokes about life and Hood's jests upon death. He has his failings; but they are not many, nor fatal. Friendship, or comradeship, or a common nationality, or whatever it may be, should not have led him to praise extravagantly Mr. Lang's very conceited and mannered translations of the *Odyssey* and *Theocritus*. He just misses saying a good thing on Rabelais when he speaks of "the great figures he scrawled across the face of the Renaissance" and does not see that the "honor of Old France" is the breath of their nostrils. He undervalues Balzac; he overrates Gordon Hake. He has caught some pet words and phrases and tricks of speech which disfigure a generally lucid style. And he will not touch the realists with the end of his quill. He very properly belabors Sir Theodore Martin apropos of his translation of Heine, but would make the castigation general, which would indicate that he is unfamiliar with Emma Lazarus' admirable efforts in the same direction. Still, it would not be easy to find another critic capable of saying so many bold and judicious things about the two-score authors who are here "appreciated," and we would heartily recommend Mr. Henley's little volume to all who were interested in the "best hundred books" discussion, and to all who like sound criticism. Like the other volumes of the series to which it belongs, "Obiter Dicta" and "Letters to Dead Authors," it is beautifully printed. (Charles Scribner's Sons.)

THE BEGUM'S DAUGHTER, by Edwin Lasseter Bynner. There is a peculiar interest for most people in stories that deal with the times of the old Knickerbockers, and this is doubly the case when, as in the present instance, the characters and events described are treated at once with imaginative power and fidelity to historical truth. The streets of the old Dutch city seem scarcely more real as we walk through them to-day than do the characters with whom Mr. Bynner has peopled them for us, the scenes of which they were the theatre, as reproduced in the pages of his powerful novel. His personages are not shadows, evoked for a moment from the past, to pass again into oblivion, but living men and women, with joys and sorrows, loves and hates, ambitions and disappointments as real as our own. What a striking picture this of Jacob Leisler as he sits at the door of his liquor shop—"a burly, robust figure, a head bristling with energy, harsh features, a severe aspect," "with his contempt for small decencies, his chin rough with a two days' beard, his long hair uncombed, his nails black, his linen soiled, his coarse hose ill-gartered, his breeches showing divers rents" and his threadbare doublet splashed with grease, yet with all this "his entire air of respectability." And the other characters are no less real. Dame Leisler, faithful to her husband through good fortune and evil fortune; Hester, victim of her father's iron rule, alike during his life and after his death; Steenie Van Cortland and his plotting mother, the haughty Madam Van Cortland; Tryntje, luckless *hausvrouw*, striving with careful hand the sand on the kitchen floor, in her "bouwerie," with little Ripse at her heels, while Rip is spending his time and his substance at *Vrouw Von Litschoe's* liquor shop; Catalina Staats, faithful in love, more faithful still in friendship; Colonel Bayard, Governor Slougher, Captain Kidd—all have an individual being, all are real men and women. Even the enigmatical Begum, with her embroidery and her apathy in all that concerns domestic affairs, her sudden intervention at certain fateful crises, her palanquin and her Indian attendant, her hatred and her revenge, becomes intelligible and real enough as we follow her in her stratagems, inspired by maternal affection, to secure her daughter's happiness, by bringing about a union between her and Hester Leisler's lover. The illustrations are excellent pen drawings by F. T. Merrill. (Little, Brown & Company, Boston.)

URANIE, by Camille Flammarion, translated by Mrs. Mary J. Serrano, may be described either as a scientific romance or a romantic presentation of certain scientific speculations. The hero, as a youth, falls in love with the heavenly muse, Uranie, or rather a sculptured representation of her on a clock. She conducts him through the stellar interspaces, giving him glimpses of worlds in process of formation and decay, systems revolving around red, blue and green suns, and all the other wonders that astronomers may see or guess at. They have adventures in some of the planets of these distant systems, where rational beings live as trees, or insects, or clouds of sentient matter. The hero afterward makes a protracted stay on Mars, and finds out all about his wonderful "canals." A human love-story is interwoven with these interstellar adventures, which finds its denouement on this same planet Mars. Here, after reaching a tragic death on Earth, the hero and heroine are reunited and, as Martians, have a dim recollection, when they first meet, of having known and loved each other in some previous state of existence. That this was really the case a wonderful invention of the Martians enables them at last to discover. The author insists that the astronomy of the future will concern itself mainly with dis-